WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1   1. A method for facilitating the serving of advertisements with e-mail content, the
2   method comprising:
3   a) accepting a request for a document including e-mail content;
4   b) generating a request identifier;
5   c) serving the requested document in association with the request
6   identifier; and
7   d) obtaining at least one ad relevant to the e-mail content.

1   2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
2   e) storing the obtained at least one ad;
3   f) accepting an ad request;
4   g) reading the stored at least one ad using information from the ad
5   request; and
6   h) serving the at least one ad read.

1   3. The method of claim 2 wherein the ad request was sourced by a client device
2   when it rendered the requested document.

1   4. The method of claim 2 wherein the ad request was sourced by a client device
2   after it rendered the requested document.

1   5. The method of claim 2 wherein the ad request was sourced by a browser
2   when it rendered the requested document.

1   6. The method of claim 2 wherein the ad request was sourced by a browser after
2   it rendered the requested document.

1   7. The method of claim 2 wherein the act of storing the obtained at least one ad
2   includes storing the request identifier in association with the at least one ad.

26

1   8. The method of claim 7 wherein the request identifier may be used as a

2   primary key to lookup the associated at least one ad.

1   9. The method of claim 7 wherein the ad request includes the request identifier.

1   10. The method of claim 9 wherein the act of reading the stored at least one ad

2   using information from the ad request uses the request identifier to lookup the

3   associated at least one ad.

1   11. The method of claim 1 wherein the act of serving the requested document in

2   association with the request identifier is performed by a first thread, and wherein

3   the act of obtaining at least one ad relevant to content of the e-mail is performed

4   by a second thread.

1   12. The method of claim 11 wherein the execution of the first thread is

2   independent of the execution of the second thread.

1   13. The method of claim 1 wherein the act of obtaining at least one ad relevant

2   to content of the e-mail includes submitting an ad request to a content-relevant

3   ad server.

1   14. The method of claim 13 wherein the ad request includes the request

2   identifier.

1   15. The method of claim 1 wherein the document including e-mail content

2   represents an individual e-mail message.

1   16. The method of claim 1 wherein the document including e-mail content

2   represents a group of e-mail messages.

1   17. The method of claim 1 wherein the document including e-mail content
2   represents an e-mail thread output as a conversation.

1   18. The method of claim 1 wherein the document including e-mail content is a
2   conversation view including a group of e-mails.

1   19. A method for rendering ads in association with e-mail content, the method
2   comprising:
3   a) requesting a document including e-mail content;
4   b) accepting the document;
5   c) rendering the document;
6   d) requesting at least one ad relevant to the e-mail content of the
7   document;
8   e) receiving the at least one ad; and
9   f) rendering the at least one ad in association with the rendered
10   document, wherein the at least one ad are rendered after the e-mail
11   content of the document has already been rendered.

1   20. The method of claim 19 wherein the accepted document includes a request
2   identifier and wherein the act of requesting at least one ad relevant to the e-mail
3   content of the document includes generating a request including the request
4   identifier.

1   21. The method of claim 19 wherein the act of requesting at least one ad
2   relevant to the e-mail content of the document occurs after the act of rendering
3   the e-mail content of the document.

1   22. The method of claim 19 wherein the document is a Web-page.

1   23. The method of claim 19 wherein the act of requesting at least one ad

2   relevant to the e-mail content of the document includes constructing a URL that

3   represents a request for at least one ad.

1   24. The method of claim 23 wherein the act of requesting at least one ad

2   relevant to the e-mail content of the document further includes instantiating an

3   ActiveX object that takes the URL and requests the at least one ad from a

4   Web-based e-mail server that sourced the document.

1   25. The method of claim 19 wherein the document is a Web page, and wherein

2   the act of rendering the at least one ad in association with the rendered e-mail

3   content of the document includes manipulating a document object model of the

4   Web page to render the ads.

1   26. The method of claim 19 wherein the act of rendering the at least one ad in

2   association with the rendered document is done such that the document is not

3   modified.

1   27. The method of claim 26 further comprising forwarding the document to

2   another client, wherein the at least one ad is not rendered on the other client

3   device.

1   28. The method of claim 19 wherein the act of rendering the at least one ad in

2   association with the rendered document is done such that the at least one ad

3   does not become a part of the document.

1   29. The method of claim 28 further comprising forwarding the document to

2   another client, wherein the at least one ad is not rendered on the other client

3   device.

1   30. The method of claim 19 wherein the document including e-mail content is an
2   individual e-mail.

1   31. The method of claim 19 wherein the document including e-mail content is
2   group of e-mails.

1   32. The method of claim 19 wherein the document including e-mail content is an
2   e-mail thread.

1   33. The method of claim 19 wherein the document including e-mail content is a
2   conversation view including a group of e-mails.

1   34. A method for facilitating the serving of advertisements with e-mail content,
2   the method comprising:
3   a) accepting a request for a document including e-mail content;
4   b) generating a request identifier;
5   c) serving the requested document in association with the request
6   identifier; and
7   d) obtaining at least one additional content item relevant to the e-mail
8   content.

1   35. The method of claim 34 wherein the at least one additional content item is
2   selected from a group consisting of (a) a news article, (b) an excerpt of a news
3   article, (c) a search query, (d) a product review, and (e) an excerpt of a product
4   review.

1   36. The method of claim 34 wherein the at least one additional content item
2   includes at least one content relevant ad and at least one further additional
3   content item selected from a group consisting of (a) a news article, (b) an excerpt
4   of a news article, (c) a search query, (d) a product review, and (e) an excerpt of a
5   product review.

1 37. The method of claim 34 further comprising:

2   e) storing the obtained at least one additional content item;

3   f) accepting an additional content item request;

4   g) reading the stored at least one additional content item using

5   information from the additional item request; and

6   h) serving the at least one additional content item read.

1 38. The method of claim 37 wherein the at least one additional content item is

2 selected from a group consisting of (a) a news article, (b) an excerpt of a news

3 article, (c) a search query, (d) a product review, and (e) an excerpt of a product

4 review.

1 39. The method of claim 37 wherein the at least one additional content item

2 includes at least one content relevant ad and at least one further additional

3 content item selected from a group consisting of (a) a news article, (b) an excerpt

4 of a news article, (c) a search query, (d) a product review, and (e) an excerpt of a

5 product review.

1 40. A method for facilitating the serving of advertisements with electronic

2 messaging content, the method comprising:

3   a) accepting a request for a document including electronic messaging

4   content;

5   b) generating a request identifier;

6   c) serving the requested document in association with the request

7   identifier; and

8   d) obtaining at least one ad relevant to the electronic messaging content.

1 41. The method of claim 40 further comprising:

2   e) storing the obtained at least one ad;

3   f) accepting an ad request;

4   g) reading the stored at least one ad using information from the ad

5   request; and

6   h) serving the at least one ad read.

1   42. The method of claim 40 wherein the electronic messaging content is content

2   from one of (A) on-line groups, (B) blogs, (C) message postings, and (D) instant

3   messaging.

1   43. A method for rendering ads in association with electronic messaging content,

2   the method comprising:

3   a) requesting a document including electronic messaging content;

4   b) accepting the document;

5   c) rendering the document;

6   d) requesting at least one ad relevant to the electronic messaging content

7   of the document;

8   e) receiving the at least one ad; and

9   f) rendering the at least one ad in association with the rendered

10   document, wherein the at least one ad are rendered after the electronic

11   messaging content of the document has already been rendered.

1   44. The method of claim 43 wherein the electronic messaging content is content

2   from one of (A) on-line groups, (B) blogs, (C) message postings, and (D) instant

3   messaging.

1   45. A method for facilitating the serving of advertisements with electronic

2   messaging content, the method comprising:

3   a) accepting a request for a document including electronic messaging

4   content;

5   b) generating a request identifier;

6   c) serving the requested document in association with the request

7   identifier; and

8   d) obtaining at least one additional content item relevant to the electronic

9   messaging content.

1   46. The method of claim 45 wherein the electronic messaging content is content

2   from one of (A) on-line groups, (B) blogs, (C) message postings, and (D) instant

3   messaging.

1   47. Apparatus for facilitating the serving of advertisements with e-mail content,

2   the apparatus comprising:

3   a) an input for accepting a request for a document including e-mail

4   content;

5   b) means for generating a request identifier;

6   c) means for serving the requested document in association with the

7   request identifier; and

8   d) means for obtaining at least one ad relevant to the e-mail content.

1   48. The apparatus of claim 47 further comprising:

2   e) a storage facility for storing the obtained at least one ad;

3   f) means for accepting an ad request;

4   g) means for reading the stored at least one ad using information from the

5   ad request; and

6   h) means for serving the at least one ad read.

1   49. The apparatus of claim 48 wherein the ad request was sourced by a client

2   device when it rendered the requested document.

1   50. The apparatus of claim 48 wherein the ad request was sourced by a client

2   device after it rendered the requested document.

1   51. The apparatus of claim 48 wherein the ad request was sourced by a browser

2   when it rendered the requested document.

1   52. The apparatus of claim 48 wherein the ad request was sourced by a browser

2   after it rendered the requested document.

1   53. The apparatus of claim 48 wherein the at least one ad stored includes the

2   request identifier stored in association with the at least one ad.

1   54. The apparatus of claim 53 wherein the request identifier may be used as a

2   primary key to lookup the associated at least one ad.

1   55. The apparatus of claim 53 wherein the ad request includes the request

2   identifier.

1   56. The apparatus of claim 55 wherein the means for reading the stored at least

2   one ad using information from the ad request use the request identifier to lookup

3   the associated at least one ad.

1   57. The apparatus of claim 47 wherein the means for serving the requested

2   document in association with the request identifier is a first thread, and wherein

3   the means for obtaining at least one ad relevant to content of the e-mail is a

4   second thread.

1   58. The apparatus of claim 57 wherein the execution of the first thread is

2   independent of the execution of the second thread.

1   59. The apparatus of claim 47 wherein the means for obtaining at least one ad

2   relevant to content of the e-mail include means for submitting an ad request to a

3   content-relevant ad server.

1   60. The apparatus of claim 59 wherein the ad request includes the request

2   identifier.

1   61. The apparatus of claim 47 wherein the document including e-mail content

2   represents an individual e-mail message.

1   62. The apparatus of claim 47 wherein the document including e-mail content

2   represents a group of e-mail messages.

1   63. The apparatus of claim 47 wherein the document including e-mail content

2   represents an e-mail thread output as a conversation.

1   64. The apparatus of claim 47 wherein the document including e-mail content is

2   a conversation view including a group of e-mails.

1   65. Apparatus for rendering ads in association with e-mail content, the apparatus

2   comprising:

3   a) means for requesting a document including e-mail content;

4   b) means for accepting the document;

5   c) means for rendering the document;

6   d) means for requesting at least one ad relevant to the e-mail content of

7   the document;

8   e) means for receiving the at least one ad; and

9   f) means for rendering the at least one ad in association with the rendered

10   document, wherein the at least one ad are rendered after the e-mail

11   content of the document has already been rendered.

1   66. The apparatus of claim 65 wherein the accepted document includes a

2   request identifier and wherein the means for requesting at least one ad relevant

3   to the e-mail content of the document include means for generating a request

4   including the request identifier.

1   67. The apparatus of claim 65 wherein the means for requesting requests the at
2   least one ad relevant to the e-mail content of the document after the means for
3   rendering renders the e-mail content of the document.

1   68. The apparatus of claim 65 wherein the document is a Web-page.

1   69. The apparatus of claim 65 wherein the means for requesting at least one ad
2   relevant to the e-mail content of the document include means for constructing a
3   URL that represents a request for at least one ad.

1   70. The apparatus of claim 69 wherein the means for requesting at least one ad
2   relevant to the e-mail content of the document further include means for
3   instantiating an ActiveX object that takes the URL and requests the at least one
4   ad from a Web-based e-mail server that sourced the document.

1   71. The apparatus of claim 65 wherein the document is a Web page, and
2   wherein the means for rendering the at least one ad in association with the
3   rendered e-mail content of the document include means for manipulating a
4   document object model of the Web page to render the ads.

1   72. The apparatus of claim 65 wherein the means for rendering the at least one
2   ad in association with the rendered document does not modify the document.

1   73. The apparatus of claim 72 further comprising means for forwarding the
2   document to another client, wherein the at least one ad is not rendered on the
3   other client device.

1   74. The apparatus of claim 65 wherein the means for rendering the at least one
2   ad in association with the rendered document does not make the at least one ad
3   become a part of the document.

1 75. The apparatus of claim 74 further comprising means for forwarding the
2 document to another client, wherein the at least one ad is not rendered on the
3 other client device.

1 76. The apparatus of claim 65 wherein the document including e-mail content is
2 an individual e-mail.

1 77. The apparatus of claim 65 wherein the document including e-mail content is
2 group of e-mails.

1 78. The apparatus of claim 65 wherein the document including e-mail content is
2 an e-mail thread.

1 79. The apparatus of claim 65 wherein the document including e-mail content is
2 a conversation view including a group of e-mails.

1 80. Apparatus for facilitating the serving of advertisements with e-mail content,
2 the apparatus comprising:
3   a) means for accepting a request for a document including e-mail content;
4   b) means for generating a request identifier;
5   c) means for serving the requested document in association with the
6   request identifier; and
7   d) means for obtaining at least one additional content item relevant to the
8   e-mail content.

1 81. The apparatus of claim 80 wherein the at least one additional content item is
2 selected from a group consisting of (a) a news article, (b) an excerpt of a news
3 article, (c) a search query, (d) a product review, and (e) an excerpt of a product
4 review.

1   82. The apparatus of claim 80 wherein the at least one additional content item
2   includes at least one content relevant ad and at least one further additional
3   content item selected from a group consisting of (a) a news article, (b) an excerpt
4   of a news article, (c) a search query, (d) a product review, and (e) an excerpt of a
5   product review.

1   83. The apparatus of claim 80 further comprising:
2   e) means for storing the obtained at least one additional content item;
3   f) means for accepting an additional content item request;
4   g) means for reading the stored at least one additional content item using
5   information from the additional item request; and
6   h) means for serving the at least one additional content item read.

1   84. The apparatus of claim 83 wherein the at least one additional content item is
2   selected from a group consisting of (a) a news article, (b) an excerpt of a news
3   article, (c) a search query, (d) a product review, and (e) an excerpt of a product
4   review.

1   85. The apparatus of claim 83 wherein the at least one additional content item
2   includes at least one content relevant ad and at least one further additional
3   content item selected from a group consisting of (a) a news article, (b) an excerpt
4   of a news article, (c) a search query, (d) a product review, and (e) an excerpt of a
5   product review.

1   86. Apparatus for facilitating the serving of advertisements with electronic
2   messaging content, the apparatus comprising:
3   a) means for accepting a request for a document including electronic
4   messaging content;
5   b) means for generating a request identifier;
6   c) means for serving the requested document in association with the
7   request identifier; and

8   d)   means for obtaining at least one ad relevant to the electronic

9   messaging content.

1   87.   The apparatus of claim 86 further comprising:

2   e)   means for storing the obtained at least one ad;

3   f)   means for accepting an ad request;

4   g)   means for reading the stored at least one ad using information from the

5   ad request; and

6   h)   means for serving the at least one ad read.

1   88.   The apparatus of claim 86 wherein the electronic messaging content is

2   content from one of (A) on-line groups, (B) blogs, (C) message postings, and (D)

3   instant messaging.

1   89.   Apparatus for rendering ads in association with electronic messaging

2   content, the apparatus comprising:

3   a)   means for requesting a document including electronic messaging

4   content;

5   b)   means for accepting the document;

6   c)   means for rendering the document;

7   d)   means for requesting at least one ad relevant to the electronic

8   messaging content of the document;

9   e)   means for receiving the at least one ad; and

10   f)   means for rendering the at least one ad in association with the rendered

11   document, wherein the at least one ad are rendered after the electronic

12   messaging content of the document has already been rendered.

1   90.   The apparatus of claim 89 wherein the electronic messaging content is

2   content from one of (A) on-line groups, (B) blogs, (C) message postings, and (D)

3   instant messaging.

1 91. Apparatus for facilitating the serving of advertisements with electronic

2 messaging content, the apparatus comprising:

3   a) means for accepting a request for a document including electronic

4   messaging content;

5   b) means for generating a request identifier;

6   c) means for serving the requested document in association with the

7   request identifier; and

8   d) means for obtaining at least one additional content item relevant to the

9   electronic messaging content.

1 92. The apparatus of claim 91 wherein the electronic messaging content is

2 content from one of (A) on-line groups, (B) blogs, (C) message postings, and (D)

3 instant messaging.